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ER 8-0214

12 March 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

SUBJECT: Congressional Calls by the DCI

On Friday, March 9th, the DCI made the following Congressional calls:

1. Telephoned Chairman Vinson of the House Armed Services Committee and confirmed his intention to move forward with the Langley site for the CIA building. Chairman Vinson had received the correspondence which the DCI had forwarded to him the day before, and he indicated he had no objection to our proceeding as indicated in this matter.

2. Tried to get Chairman Cannon of the House Appropriations Committee on the telephone, but Mr. Cannon was out of town. He will be back next week.

3. Telephoned George Mahon of the House Appropriations Committee, described his effort to get in touch with the Chairman, and stated to Mr. Mahon his desire to have another meeting with the CIA Subcommittee in the near future. The Director indicated that there were a lot of specific details on personnel, etc. which he felt the Committee should have. Mr. Mahon advised the Director to contact Chairman Cannon next week to set up a meeting. The Director also gave Mr. Mahon a report on Mr. [ ] head of the CIA Office in [ ] who was evidently the subject of Mr. Mahon's second-hand report that a CIA employee was painting his house on government time. The Director explained that [ ] the father of seven children, was not in comfortable financial circumstances and that whereas it was true that he was building a new house for his family, all his work was done on his own time. The Director added that Mr. [ ] was doing a splendid job and that he regretted that damaging rumors of this kind were being circulated. Congressman Mahon is to pass this information on to his [ ] friends.

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4. Telephoned Congressman John McCormack, House Majority Leader, and visited him in his office. The Director indicated the interest of this Agency in the bills introduced by Congressmen McCormack and Martin regarding compensation for bomb damage to the Vatican during World War II. Mr. McCormack searched his desk for a memorandum or a letter from Rod O'Connor, Department of State, which he never found, apparently having something to do with the appropriateness of making an appropriation for such a purpose without authorizing legislation. Apparently Chairman Cannon of the Appropriations Committee had raised a question on this point. Mr. McCormack stated that Cannon was technically correct, and there appears to be a question as to what the next move should be. I gathered that Joe Martin is discussing the problem with John Taber, who may in turn discuss it again with Chairman Cannon. (Note: I have discussed this matter with O'Connor, who did not know of Mr. Cannon's reservations. We agreed that he would make further inquiries in a few days and keep us posted on the status).

Mr. McCormack read in toto and described in detail a recent document and oral briefing he had received from [REDACTED] a private intelligence operator in whom the Congressman evidently has great confidence. The Director listened to this analysis of the world situation, and commented that he knew [REDACTED] well, and had had discussions with him and with other members of his family. One of the more startling statements in the report read by the Congressman was [REDACTED]

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There was some discussion of the Joint Committee problem. Without committing himself one way or another, the Congressman indicated that he plans to talk to Speaker Rayburn about this when the Speaker returns from Texas (probably not until after the Easter recess). As Acting Speaker, he would in the meantime use his influence to avoid having any action taken by the House. The Director passed on Senator Hayden's observation that this matter would probably not be referred to the House for some time, inasmuch as the Senate would probably not act in the near future. The Congressman gave the impression that he would follow the Speaker's lead on this one.

The Congressman indicated laughingly that he was against us on the building location at Langley, because of opposition expressed

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by Archbishop O'Boyle, whose diocese does not cross the Potomac river. (Note: We are checking on previous correspondence with the Archbishop on this matter, and will take all feasible steps to try to improve the situation. Although stated in a jocular vein, Mr. McCormack may well be serious in his intention to vote against the Langley site).

As we left his office, Congressman McCormack strongly recommended that the Director get in touch with Chairman Dawson of the House Committee on Government Operations and offer to appear before his Committee to brief them on CIA's activities. The Congressman emphasized there was no special reason for this request, and attributed it simply to the fact that Congressman Dawson's Committee was the parent Committee of this Agency, inasmuch as it had considered the National Security Act of 1947.

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Legislative Counsel

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Remarks:

Norm: The Director has asked what we should do about Chairman Dawson. We did have him to lunch some time ago and I believe at that time gave him a briefing.

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